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THE MIDDLE EAST

In the light of present world events and the projected U.S. build-up in military strength, it is believed that more affirmative U.S. action to safeguard the vital security interests of the U.S. in the Middle East* is necessary, and can be accomplished without making any guarantees of combat forces. The present paper approaches the problems of U.S. security in relation to the Middle East as a whole from a political standpoint. It takes into consideration the absence of any adequate indigenous political basis for joint action by the countries of the area, and their increasing desire for U.S. participation in Middle East defense.

Justification for Review of Our Middle East Plans

(1) U.S. actions have not adequately reflected U.S. policy that the security of the Middle East is vital to U.S. security. U.S. plans are inadequate to protect our important security interests in the oil, the air and naval bases, the communication and transportation facilities, and the general strategic location of the Middle East.

(2) The benefits of our present efforts in Greece, Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia can be more fully realized, and indigenous defenses in the Middle East as a whole can be maximized through relatively small additional U.S. efforts in the area.

(3) The U.K., which by agreement with the U.S. has assumed primary military responsibility in the Middle East, is in a position of declining political influence in the area and lacks the capability of successfully defending the area even with probable Commonwealth support. The U.K. has no plans for the defense of Saudi Arabia, in which U.S. interests are predominant, and lacks the intimate working relations with the Turkish, Greek and Iranian armed forces which the U.S. enjoys through the military missions and aid programs in those countries.

(4) The Department of State A/CDC/MR
The increasing suspicion of the Middle East peoples that the U.S. has left the defense of the area to the British and will play no part in the event of war, is producing political disaffection and deteriorations in the area. The risk is increasing that if the U.S. does not take a more positive attitude important areas of the Middle East will swing away from the West and toward the U.S.S.R., with the resulting encirclement of Turkey and the loss of her full military effectiveness, even without war or in advance of war. Only direct U.S. participation in building up the defenses of the area as a whole can provide the confidence required to halt this adverse trend

*"Middle East" in this paper includes the Eastern Mediterranean, Greece, Turkey, Iran, Israel, and the Arab States including Egypt and Libya.

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trend and prepare the Middle East for allied military use in the event of war.

(5) If the West does not participate determinedly in defense of the Middle East, it is doubtful that the support of the Middle East countries could be regained after the war. If the U.S. itself does not participate, American prestige in the area would be lost and it is doubtful whether American firms would be permitted to resume their oil concessions and other interests following liberation.

(6) It must be assumed that the Kremlin is fully aware that Soviet denial of Middle East oil to the West would profoundly affect the economic and strategic power of Western Europe and, conversely, that Soviet control of Middle East oil would not only greatly enhance Soviet power but would be indispensable to Soviet consolidation of a conquest of Western Europe.

Proposals

The following proposals seek to maximize, at minimal cost to the U.S., the will of the people of the Middle East to cooperate with the West in resistance to the U.S.S.R. both now and in event of war; to translate that will into a coordinated indigenous effort to resist the Soviet advance; and, if the West is nevertheless overrun, to harry and sabotage the invader and to assist in liberation. The basic features of the proposals are a radical strengthening of Turkey's armed forces, which is currently being considered independently; the development of stability-in-depth in the Arab States and Israel; and the stimulation and coordination of local area defense efforts through combined U.S.-U.K. leadership in the area.

(1) Turkey's fighting power, the keystone of the defense of the Middle East, should be more fully developed. Military and economic assistance to Turkey should be increased as conditions permit so as to give Turkey a greater war reserve, permit it to increase the size of the regular army, and provide stand-by equipment for mobilization of reserves. Turkish participation in the defense of Greece and Iran should be explored. Military and economic aid to Greece and Iran should be moderately expanded.

(2) The U.S. should make it clear that because of vital U.S. security interests in the Middle East, the U.S., consistent with its U.N. obligations and its other commitments, is prepared to assist the countries of the Middle East in strengthening their capabilities to defend the area as a whole against aggression. (This does not mean any guarantee of forces to the countries concerned and no such inference should be given.)

(3) The U.S. and U.K. should concurrently strengthen the forces of the Arab States and Israel, on a basis of partnership

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with us, in such a way as to promote their stability and pro-Western orientation. The U.S. and U.K. should undertake and accelerate such measures as:

- (a) Technical and economic assistance that will help convince the peoples of the Middle East that they will benefit as individuals as well as states, from the victory of the west;
- (b) Development of fighting groups and techniques which are best suited to local capabilities and terrain;
- (c) Initiating limited arms supply programs, required to achieve (b), to certain of the Arab States and Israel by early delivery of token quantities.
- (d) Furnishing on request small U.S. and U.K. training missions and individual service technicians, increased training of local military personnel in U.S. and U.K. schools;
- (e) Making, in agreement with local governments, "show-the-flag" visits by air force planes and naval vessels; and
- (f) Placing of orders in local industries for needed raw materials and war material.

(4) The U.S. should join the U.K. in establishing a combined military mission, or a closely coordinated separate U.S. military mission, for the Middle East as a whole. Such a mission would stimulate cooperation among the states not now possible through indigenous groupings in the absence of a U.S. underwriting commitment. A direct relationship should be developed between the chiefs-of-staff in each country and the U.S.-U.K., or U.S., Middle East mission. The chiefs of the U.S. military missions in Greece, Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia would act as U.S. country advisers within the U.S.-U.K., or U.S., Middle East structure. The establishment of the U.S.-U.K. or U.S. mission for the Middle East would not alter the fact that the U.K. and Commonwealth have primary responsibility for the defense of the area and the provision of forces therefor. It would, however, make much more attractive to the Arab States and Israel, through the establishment of a direct relationship of each to the Middle East mission, the development of a regional pattern of military planning.

(5) The defense of the "outer ring" (the Turkish-Iranian mountain line), if militarily feasible, is politically the most desirable line of defense of the Middle East and should become the target for which provision would be made when the U.S. and allied power build-up makes this practicable.

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(6) Contingent upon a resolution of the Kashmir dispute, the participation of Pakistan in the defense of Iran should be explored. Consideration should also be given to the military cooperation, as soon as political conditions permit, of Yugoslavia with Greece and Turkey.

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